

The LECs operate an "essential facility", and should have to accommodate other ISP firms that wish to purchase access from them. This wholesale provisioning stimulates competition and benefits consumers. Only when there was competition did the LECs begin to offer services similar to their competitors that consumers had been requesting for years. Even so, the LECs continue to subsidize and undercut their competitors using revenues from regulated portions of their business to sell unregulated services at below market value. Further, the cost of the infrastructure that CLECs and other ISPs want access to was partially underwritten by taxpayers through fees, taxes, franchise costs, and other revenue vehicles. The LECs are not the sole owners of the infrastructure that connects homes and business with other portions of the telecomm and data networks and should not have exclusive, anti-competitive, and monopolistic control over them.

Chairman Powell: Please do not sell out to BIG BUSINESS, at the expense of competition and the small businesses of our country.